



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

frowned upon or ostracised by their orthodox neighbors, are generally looked up to as worthy of special respect. There are many instances, however, in which these people have acquired wealth in commercial and manufacturing enterprises, and then it often happens that there is a considerable relaxing of ascetic practices and habits. Some of the Russian sects hold opinions as to the relation of the sexes repugnant to morality; others make vows of perpetual continency; and, with some the rites and ceremonies enjoined have a hideous character. Singularly enough, the people holding these extravagant and revolting beliefs are usually in outward conduct the most respectable and honest of men. There are also many communities somewhat similar to the Friends or Quakers among us, rejecting the sacraments and all ritualistic observances, and meeting for worship in private houses, because "the Almighty dwells not in temples made by hands." As in other countries, dissenting sects have from time to time undergone persecution by the civil power, but at the present time enjoy freedom and toleration under certain restrictions, amongst which is the prohibition to proselytize from the orthodox communion. This is a crime against Russian law, and applies to all denominations.

V.

TOPICAL TREATMENT OF HISTORY.

AMONG the many modern methods for teaching history the topical possesses some points of superiority to all others. The student who would become familiar with the tendency of thought, the political constitution, and the social conditions of France in the eighteenth century has only to study the events of the French Revolution. The burning of Troy, the fall of Babylon, the siege of Jerusalem, the retreat of the Ten Thousand, when surveyed from all possible standpoints, and with the best possible aids, furnish the learner with all that he can appropriate of the history of these times. Such topical inquiry accomplishes far more of the desirable results of historical research than the confused massing of incidents and dates so commonly insisted on in the class-room.

The Institutes of General History,* prepared by a practical professor at Brown University, is a remarkably concise historical work in this line. It discusses, in forms suitable for the student or the general reader, ten of the more important periods and events in the world's history, exclusive of English affairs, except as they are closely connected with those of the Continent. The topics noted include The Old East, The Classical Period, The Dissolution of Rome, The Mediæval Roman Empire of the West, Feudalism, and the French Monarchy, Islam and the Crusades, The Renaissance and The Reformation, The Thirty Years' War, The French Revolution, and Prussia and the New Empire. The subject matter is widely suggestive rather than final, and while clearly presenting the more important facts connected with a given topic, it encourages the reader to diligent research. The work "blazes through the jungle of the ages a course along which the instructor can guide his class as much as he lists."

The general preparation and careful condensation of these important and fruitful themes is worthy of especial praise. But no feature of the work will be more valued by those who would thoroughly acquaint themselves with the philosophy of great events in the history of the world than the select bibliographies which precede each section, and which are sufficiently exhaustive to stimulate the ambition of all lovers of history. The authorities to whom reference is made are so

* "Brief Institutes of History." Being a companion to the author's "Brief Institutes of Our Constitutional History, English and American." By E. Benjamin Andrews, D D., LL.D., Professor of History in Brown University.—Silver, Rogers & Co.

numerous, and so diverse in their sympathies and deductions, that a broad and comprehensive idea may be gained of the theme under consideration. For example, the bibliography of the chapter on The Classical Period contains particular and exact reference to Grote, Duncker, Zeller, Ranke, Cox, Mulford and Thirlwall, Mommsen, Duruy, Curteis, Thierriy, Nitzsch, Arnold, and as many more. So that a course of collateral reading may be extended to almost any limit.

VI.

THACKERAY'S LETTERS.

THOSE who have, as well as those who have not, read the series of Thackeray's Letters which has just been brought to a close in *Scribner's Magazine*, will alike be interested by their republication in book form in the very handsome volume just issued.* They reveal the man Thackeray as none of his books can do. Written in the warmth of personal friendship, and without a thought of their being preserved and published, they constitute a perfect photograph of character. Quaintly and deliciously humorous as most of them are, there are very many glimpses in them of the more serious and reflective side of Thackeray's nature, and, after reading them, one ceases to wonder at the strength of personal attachment so many different kinds of people felt towards him. It would be unfair to search through them for profundities, and happily there is no pedantry, but here and there the philosopher as well as the humorist is revealed. Here is a touch of nature: "What a history that is in the Thomas à Kempis book! The scheme of that book would make the world the most wretched, useless, dreary, doting place of sojourn—there would be no manhood, no love, no tender ties of mother and child, no use of intellect, no trade or science, a set of beings crawling about, avoiding one another, and howling a perpetual *miserere*." Again, "I am sure it is partly because he is a lord that I like that man; but it is his lovingness, manliness, and simplicity which I like best." Of letter writing in general Thackeray complains that "most people in composing letters translate their thoughts into a pompous, unfamiliar language, as necessary and proper under the circumstances." Certainly he himself is free from this formality. At one time he begins a letter with the question, "Do you see how mad everybody is in the world? Or is it not my own insanity?" But it must be remembered that it is not only the person writing, but the person written to, that helps to make the letter. Moreover, if Thackeray had had the least suspicion that one day the world would read this correspondence with familiar friends, could he have written in so *negligé* a form? We think not. And perhaps there is such a thing as overdoing this species of triviality, if so it may be called. There will be many imitators of Thackeray, we fear, whose correspondents happily will be the only people likely ever to feel bored by their attempts at drollery. That Thackeray found time amidst his literary work to write so often and at such a length to his intimate friends shows the loyalty of his heart, and also perhaps suggests a touch of "homesickness" which found relief in just this way.

There is only one thing wanted to make this collection complete, and that is the appearance in it of at least some of the letters from Thackeray's correspondents. One gets such charming glimpses of these good people, particularly of Mrs. Brookfield, through Thackeray's spectacles, that it seems a pity not to know more about them and hear them talk for themselves.

* "A Collection of Letters of Thackeray, 1847-1855." With portraits and reproductions of Letters and Drawings.—Charles Scribner's Sons.